

Executive Decision Notice

Monitoring the Homelessness Strategy and Interim Service and Spending Review

Decision to be taken by: Assistant City Mayor – Housing

Decision to be taken on: 15 December 2016

Lead Director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

■ Ward(s) affected: All

■ Report authors:

Caroline Carpendale – Head of Service, ext. 37-1701

■

1. Summary

- 1.1 After considering a report that provided an update on the monitoring of the progress of the Council's Homelessness Strategy, a consultation exercise was initiated to consult on the recommendations for a reconfiguration of homelessness services and the associated savings profile that was being proposed.
- 1.2 Local Authorities are currently required to consult and seek the views of local people, the voluntary, community and private sectors and stakeholders on proposals that may impact upon how statutory and local services are to be provided.
- 1.3 A full consultation exercise has now been completed which included:-
 - An online consultation exercise for a 4 week period that ran from 14th September – 12th October 2016.
 - Individual meetings with statutory bodies, and voluntary sector providers that may be affected if the proposals are accepted and agreed.
 - An extraordinary meeting of the Homelessness Reference Group on 26th September 2016 which is made up of all the statutory and voluntary sector organisations that work or are involved with Homelessness Services
 - Feedback from Leicester City Council Staff.
 - Consultation and feedback from the Housing Scrutiny Commission.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To approve the amended proposals to reconfigure homelessness services to ensure that effective homelessness services in line with the key objectives of the Homelessness Strategy continue to be provided and are cost effective and efficient to achieve savings to the General Fund as part of the Housing Spending Review Phase 3.
- 2.2 To note the views of the Housing Scrutiny Commission, who considered the proposals at their meeting on 15 November 2016.

- 2.3 To reflect the anticipated savings in the approved budget and budget strategy, and reduce budgets accordingly by the following amounts:
- a. £191k in 2016/17;
 - b. rising to £486k in 2017/18, and thereafter £486k per year;
- 2.4 To delegate authority to the Director of Finance to determine the specific budget ceilings affected.

3. Supporting information and Options.

- 3.1 The reconfiguration of some of the homelessness services are in response to legislative changes that mean the future viability of supported housing models remains dependent upon the government's intention to impose the LHA cap upon supported housing.
- 3.2 As part of the continuous monitoring of the strategy, we need to ensure that services remain fit for purpose and provide efficient and effective options to our service users.
- 3.3 Full and very careful consideration has been given to the feedback received from the consultation exercise and taking this into account it is recommended that Executive approve the amended proposals. We will be able to continue to provide effective services for those who need to access homelessness advice and assistance.

The amended proposals are to:-

Retain the Day Centre provided by the VCS at the Dawn Centre and continue to support The Centre Project to support this vulnerable client group by providing a further year of funding (£24,500) for 2017/18. This will be reviewed again along with all other procured contracts that end in March 2018 when a full review of the current homeless strategy will have been completed in order to support the future aims and objective of the Councils new strategy which will include a full need analysis of what services will be required going forward. The Council have a legal duty to review and produce a new Homelessness Strategy every five years.

In addition to this, and in full consideration, of the feedback and to provide continued support to reduce re-offending, Executive are asked to approve the reduction of the Offender Provision by 10 units (from 30 to 20) for 2017/18 rather than the original proposal of halving this provision. This will then also be reviewed with all other procured contracts that end in March 2018.

4. Details of Scrutiny

- 4.1 The feedback on the consultation exercise was presented to the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the 15th November, 2016. In summary Members said

they were particularly concerned that the impact of the change to end the grant subsidy bid to the Centre Project was going to have a negative effect upon service users and the social impact of the proposals could be detrimental to some of the most vulnerable in society

- 4.2 The Chair stated that he would provide a statement back to the Executive that they had concerns and their recommendations.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications – Pete Coles Principal Accountant (Housing)

- 5.1.1 The Homelessness Services Spending Review has a target of £1.5m. Savings of £0.76m have already been achieved, as approved by the Executive in December 2014, by focussing service aims on the prevention of homelessness. The proposals in this report are expected to deliver further savings of £0.49m, of which £0.19m is anticipated in 2016/17, rising to full year effect of £0.49m in 2017/18.

5.2 Legal implications - Jeremy Rainbow, Senior Legal Officer

- 5.2.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications - Mark Jeffcote, Senior Environmental Consultant

- 5.3.1 There are no climate change implications associated with this report.

5.4 Equalities Implications

- 5.4.1 A detailed Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. Our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires us to have consideration of the equalities implications of any of our proposals throughout the decision making process. Although the report does not present a final decision, it does set the context for reviewing current provision. On that basis, it would be timely for the report to include some trend information on the profile, by protected characteristic, of the service users of the homelessness services referred to, so that decision makers are aware of the protected characteristics affected, and how they are affected – key considerations required in paying ‘due regard’ to our PSED. This equality analysis of service users would complement the excellent evidence of outcomes achieved by the homelessness services described in the report, and would enhance our ability to demonstrate that we are meeting the general aims of our PSED: eliminating discrimination; promoting equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations between different groups.

6. Background information and other papers:

7. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

8. Is this a “key decision”?

No

9. If a key decision please explain reason

N/A

In determining whether it is a key decision you will need consider if it is likely:

- to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates.
- to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working *in two or more wards in the City*.

Expenditure or savings will be regarded as significant if:

- (a) In the case of additional recurrent revenue expenditure, it is not included in the approved revenue budget, and would cost in excess of £0.5m p.a.;
- (b) In the case of reductions in recurrent revenue expenditure, the provision is not included in the approved revenue budget, and savings of over £0.5m p.a. would be achieved;
- (c) In the case of one off or capital expenditure, spending of over £1m is to be committed on a scheme that has not been specifically authorised by Council.

In deciding whether a decision is significant you need to take into account:

- Whether the decision may incur a significant social, economic or environmental risk.
- The likely extent of the impact of the decision both within and outside of the City.
- The extent to which the decision is likely to result in substantial public interest
- The existence of significant communities of interest that cannot be defined spatially.